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# Music in Euripides' *Medea*

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## Introduction

Among the major developments in the study of Greek tragedy of the last forty years has been the increasing tendency to regard our texts as the written residue of a multifaceted performance, where they combined with acting, movement etc to give more than the sum of the parts. Within this trend, however, scholars have made only limited progress in analysing the contribution of music – naturally enough given our scanty sources.

In several plays, the distribution of musical versus spoken sections appears deliberate. For example, in his *Electra* Euripides saved up the 'recitative' sound of anapaests for the entrance of Clytemnestra (line 988), and contrasted the sparse use of music in lines 1-1146 (c.22% of lines accompanied) with the dénouement as the characters respond to Clytemnestra's assassination (lines 1147-1359, c.71% accompanied); the soundworld shifts with the plot. More ambitious approaches have tried to find patterning of rhythms within a play's musical sections, or to analyse the politics of which characters are given song.[1]

Perhaps the most stimulating insight into Euripides' music has come from contextualising it within the increasing musical professionalisation and change of c.440-380 – the so-called 'New Music'. Of the composers associated with these developments in antiquity, Euripides is one of the most senior, and Csapo (1999-2000) has argued persuasively that he was no reactive dabbler in an elitist avant-garde. Rather, the new styles were popular (though easily pilloried), and Euripides' experimentation with them can be dated before 420, i.e. before much of the evidence for developments in dithyramb. Csapo studies in particular Euripides' use of actors' monodies and duets, trochaic recitative, astrophic choruses, and the tendency for these forms to be assigned to female or non-Greek characters in emotional situations. These practices distinguish Euripides from Sophocles, so far as we can tell.

In this paper I shall argue that Euripides already in 431 was engaged with the discourse and possibly the practice of musical novelty, in a different way from the features discussed by Csapo.[2] The second half of the paper will discuss what characters within the *Medea* say about music. Before that, I shall discuss and defend the plausibility of a difficult testimonium in Athenaeus, which appears to say that the play was innovative in its treatment of melody.[3] These two issues have been studied separately before, but connecting

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[1] E.g. Scott (1984), (1996), Chiasson (1988) for rhythmic patterning, Hall (1999) for singing and social status.

[2] Contrast also Weiss's demonstration (this volume) that throughout his extant works Euripides played with the instrumental possibilities where his *auloi*-accompanied chorus discusses a mythological syrinx-accompanied dance.

[3] The evidence for tragic melody, apart from Dionysius of Halicarnassus' discussion of the chorus's opening words in *Orestes* (*Comp.* 11 = *DAGM* no.2), and the Orestes Papyrus (*DAGM* no.3), is scattered and potentially distorted by the systematisations of harmonic theory from Eratocles on (see e.g. West 1992, 184-5).

them will enhance our appreciation of both: the passages of *Medea* will support Athenaeus' testimony, at least to the extent that they chime remarkably well with it; and Athenaeus' testimony, if correct, affects the way in which the passages of *Medea* should be interpreted.

## Athenaeus' Testimony

The testimonium for the *Medea*'s musical practice is embedded in two passages of Athenaeus, where characters discuss an intriguing dramatic work by Callias of Athens (7 276a, 10 453c-4a; cf. 10 448b).[4]

At the start of book 7 Cynulcus mentions the number of potential puzzles in Clearchus of Soloi's work *On Brainteasers* (*griphoi*), and gives an example:

> εἰ δ' ἀπιστεῖς, ὦ ἑταῖρε, καὶ τὸ βιβλίον κεκτημένος οὐ φθονήσω σοι, ἀφ' οὗ πολλὰ ἐκμαθὼν εὐπορήσεις προβλημάτων. καὶ γὰρ Καλλίαν ἱστορεῖ τὸν Ἀθηναῖον γραμματικὴν συνθεῖναι τραγῳδίαν, ἀφ' ἧς ποιῆσαι τὰ μέλη καὶ τὴν διάθεσιν Εὐριπίδην ἐν Μηδείᾳ καὶ Σοφοκλέα τὸν Οἰδίπουν.
>
> If you don't believe me, my friend, I do own the book and will happily lend it to you. You will learn much from it, and have a good store of posers. For instance, he records that Callias of Athens composed a tragedy which was *grammatike*, and that it was on the basis of it that Euripides wrote the melodies and delivery[?] in the *Medea*, and that Sophocles wrote his *Oedipus*.[5]

This information is indeed puzzling, as Cynulcus says. Is this the famous Athenian writer Callias? If so, what is a comedian doing writing a tragedy? Is *grammatike* a predicative adjective ('a tragedy which was lettered') or an object complement ('a tragedy *Learning One's Letters*'), and what would either entail? Assuming from these two puzzles that it was not a normal tragedy, could it have been a major influence on two such canonical tragedies as *Medea* and *Oedipus* (*Tyrannus*, as specified later)?

Athenaeus raises these questions only to abandon them immediately: he sets us a brainteaser, then suspends the solution until the middle of book 10.[6] There Aemilianus Maurus, in moving the discussion on from drinking-culture, proposes an enquiry about sympotic brainteasers, 'not in the manner of the work entitled *Lettered Tragedy* by Callias of Athens' but proceeding from a definition of brainteasers to comic discussions of them and eventually to the forfeits for failing to find a solution (448b).[7] The host Larensi(u)s responds with a disquisition which starts from and repeatedly returns to Clearchus' *On*

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[4] Significant discussions include Pöhlmann (1971), Rosen (1999), Ruijgh (2001), Smith (2003), Gagné (2013). Koller (1956), D'Angour (2006, 281-2) and Phillips (2015) accept them – more easily than I do – as evidence for Euripides' melodic practice. Phillips considers its possible ramifications for the portrayal of Echo in the *Andromeda* of 412.

[5] I discuss below the construction of *grammatike* and whether διάθεσις does mean 'delivery'. For Clearchus see Wehrli (1948), Tsitsiridis (2013).

[6] Similarly Smith (2003), 315.

[7] Aemilianus' wording τὴν... ἐπιγραφομένην γραμματικὴν τραγῳδίαν still leaves the work's title ambiguous, in a way I cannot translate. As with Cynulcus' wording (above), it could also mean 'the tragedy entitled *Learning One's Letters*'. But it will presently become clear that the play was not a 'tragedy', so that word must be part of the title.

*Brainteasers*, which is clearly Athenaeus' main source.[8] In particular, Larensius' information on Callias overlaps with what Cynulcus explicitly drew from Clearchus – notably the claim that he influenced both *Medea* and *Oedipus Tyrannus*. Clearchus distinguished seven types of brainteaser (448c). Larensius does not list them all, but he subsequently mentions that in *On Proverbs* Clearchus made one category of brainteaser 'things pertaining to the study [θεωρία] of letters and syllables' (457e). To this would belong Castorion's *Hymn to Pan* (composed of interchangeable iambic metra containing eleven letters each) and Lasus' asigmatic hymns, which Larensius cites just after Callias (454f, 455c). Probably Callias' play, with its versified alphabets and syllabaries, and characters describing letter-shapes, fell into this category.[9] Interestingly, Larensius cites an alternative title Γραμματικὴ Θεωρία, *Studying Letters* (453c).[10] This title may explain Maurus' implication that Callias conducted an unmethodical 'enquiry' into *griphoi*.

Larensius goes into more detail than Cynulcus. Callias' prologue involved a character reciting the Ionic alphabet, and was followed by a chorus based around the chanting of consonant-vowel syllables which characterised primary education in the larger centres:[11]

> ὁ χορὸς δὲ γυναικῶν ἐκ τῶν σύνδυο πεποιημένος αὐτῷ ἐστιν ἔμμετρος ἅμα καὶ μεμελοποιημένος τόνδε τὸν τρόπον·
>
> βῆτ' ἄλφα βα, βῆτ' εἶ βε, βῆτ' ἦτα βη,
> βῆτ' ἰῶτα βι, βῆτ'
> οὖ βο, βῆτ' ὗ βυ, βῆτ' ὦ βω,[12]

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[8] 448c-e, 452c, 452f, 454f, 455b, 457c (followed by a lengthy paraphrase from Clearchus' *On Proverbs*). Athenaeus is also our main source for Clearchus' Περὶ φιλίας, Γεργίθιος, Ἐρωτικά, Περὶ βίων, and Περὶ ἐνύδρων, and a major source for his Παροιμίαι.

[9] I believe one can safely infer that the fragment at 454a, where a woman describes the shapes ΨΩ as the start of a name she is ashamed to be 'swollen' or 'pregnant' with (cf. ψώα 'stench'), is also from the *Lettered Tragedy*. As Slater (2002, 127) notes, ΨΩ is thematic in that it also featured as the last syllable of the chorus discussed below; he also observes that Ψ and Ω, as newcomers to the Attic alphabet, are aptly figured as a bastard child.

[10] None of the examples in LSJ s.v. θεωρία III.3 mean 'spectacle', and I doubt that sense here. This title might itself pun on the sense 'sacred embassy' (in that the performers have come to offer their play to Dionysus), but there is no sign that the plot involved an embassy.

[11] Syllabaries in antiquity: Rix (1991) Cr 9.1 (Etruscan, c.650), Pl. *Plt.* 277e-8c, *Crat.* 424bc, Quint. 1.1.26-31; Morgan (1998), 59, Cribiore (2001), 172-3.

[12] The colometry is speculative. Consonant-names are either trochees or long monosyllables; metrical responsion requires elided trochees and monosyllables followed by hiatus. ζξψ appear not to have closed the preceding syllable (cf. West 1982, 17). The distribution of short syllables suggests iambic or trochaic metre. This suggests βᾱ, βῑ, βῠ, to give – – ∪ – – – ∪ – – ∪ – – ∪ – ∪ – – – ∪ – – ∪ – – –. Given the rarity of ⏑ – ∪ in trochees until Euripides' *Helen* (West 1987, 52-5), this is best interpreted as eight iambic metra. There was probably at least one licentious elision (see below, n. 15), the best place for which seems to be after – ∪ – ∪ – – (Dale 1968, 72). The reconstruction by Ruijgh (2001, 260-1, 293-8) is inadmissible, since his view that our text of Athenaeus is an abbreviation, to which one can liberally restore small words, has been superseded (Letrouit 1991, Rodríguez-Noriega Guillén 2000).

> καὶ πάλιν ἐν ἀντιστρόφῳ τοῦ μέλους καὶ τοῦ μέτρου γάμμα ἄλφα, γάμμα εἶ, γάμμα ἦτα, γάμμα ἰῶτα, γάμμα οὖ, γάμμα ὗ, γάμμα ὦ, καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν λοιπῶν συλλαβῶν ὁμοίως ἑκάστων· τό τε μέτρον καὶ τὸ μέλος ἐν ἀντιστρόφοις ἔχουσι πᾶσαι ταὐτόν, ὥστε τὸν Εὐριπίδην μὴ μόνον ὑπονοεῖσθαι τὴν Μήδειαν ἐντεῦθεν πεποιηκέναι πᾶσαν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ μέλος αὐτὸ μετενηνοχότα φανερὸν εἶναι. (453de)
> As for the chorus of women, he has composed it metrically from paired letters, together with the following type of melody:
>
> *Bet'-alpha ba, bet'-e be, bet'-eta bē,*
> *Bet'-iota bi, bet'-*
> *o bo, bet'-u bu, bet'-ō bō.*
>
> And again in a responsion [*antistrophos*] of tune and metre, *gamma-alpha, gamma-e, gamma-eta, gamma-iota, gamma-o, gamma-u, gamma-ō*, and so on for each remaining set of syllables: they all have the same metre and melody in responding stanzas [*antistrophoi*]. Hence Euripides not only is suspected of having composed his entire *Medea* from that source, but has patently borrowed the tune itself.[13]

Larensius specifies that what influenced Euripides was Callias' opening chorus, whose melody Athenaeus presupposes his readers will be able to supply from their schooldays. Larensius emphasises that the melody repeated in each stanza, hence disregarding the natural accentuation of consonant-names (e.g. βῆτα vs κάππα) and the normal avoidance of hiatus (to allow e.g. μῦ εἶ με).[14] Such simplifications do seem plausible for a classroom and mnemonic context. Callias' chorus caused a (mere) suspicion that 'the *Medea* in its entirety' was based on it, while Euripides 'patently borrowed the tune itself'.

There follows a comment about Callias' influence on Sophocles. 'And people say that Sophocles, after hearing this, took the license of dividing his poetry by its metre[?] (διελεῖν... τὸ ποίημα τῷ μέτρῳ).' This is exemplified by, in the manuscripts, a deformation of *OT* 332-3. The comment is shown to be parenthetical by the reversion in the next sentence to the topic of antistrophes, which is not relevant to Sophocles' passage since that is spoken.[15]

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[13] The first use of ἀντίστροφος with a genitive is unusual. For ἐν ἀντιστρόφοις cf. 'Arist.' *Prob.* 19.15 918b13. μεταφέρω is either 'transfer' or 'modify', but recognisably – hence 'borrowed'.

[14] Hiatus is also admitted around the letter-names in Callias' prologue (453d).

[15] Compare Larensius' aside on Stesichorus at 451d. Sophocles' lines do contain an ἀντίστροφος in the sense 'crasis' (Σ Ar. *Pl.* 3), but Larensius can hardly switch meanings so abruptly. Perhaps Clearchus explained the point about Sophocles clearly. I would restore the quotation from *OT*: the manuscripts' deformation, 'I shall cause grief neither to myself nor to you if convicted of this', is plausibly an attempt to suit meaning (not form) to context, in that it could represent Sophocles asking for leniency. διελεῖν refers to word-divisions at 453c, f, and *OT* 332 ταῦτ' is (probably along with *OC* 1164 μολόντ') the most striking instance in Greek drama of elision at verse-end. I infer that Callias' chorus exhibited a similar anomalous elision. Similarly Ruijgh (2001), 315-18. Smith (2003) suggests very differently that Clearchus' point was the appearance of letter-names within tragic language (e.g. ταῦ in ταῦτ'), but why would anyone have chosen *OT* 332-3 to exemplify this pervasive feature of language? I do not understand how Smith takes διελεῖν... τὸ ποίημα τῷ μέτρῳ and its connection to the quotation (2003, 326).

> διόπερ οἱ λοιποὶ τὰς ἀντιστρόφους ἀπὸ τούτου παρεδέχοντο πάντες, ὡς ἔοικεν, εἰς τὰς τραγῳδίας.
> Hence later people, apparently, all borrowed antistrophes into their tragedies from this source.[16]

Thus Callias' use of antistrophes is the key point on both sides of his alleged influence on Euripides. Clearchus evidently knew that metrically corresponding antistrophes occurred in earlier tragedy, so the emphasis is on Callias' repetition of melody as well as metre, which I shall call 'melodic responsion'. The emphasis implies that melodic responsion features in the pair of claims which are crucial for us – (i) that Euripides clearly borrowed τὸ μέλος αὐτό from Callias' chorus, and (ii) that there was reason to suspect that the influence of that chorus extended throughout the whole *Medea*; Cynulcus' counterpart claim spoke of the pervasive influence on Euripides' μέλη καὶ διάθεσιν. Where exactly is melodic responsion relevant here? If we make it part of claim (i), we need to attribute to μέλος a sense like 'technique of melodization', and to envisage some second influence which Callias might have exerted on *Medea* as a whole – perhaps covered by Cynulcus' word διάθεσις, but quite unclear in its nature. More plausibly, melodic responsion is part of claim (ii), μέλος in claim (i) simply means 'tune', and διάθεσις ('organisation, delivery') is a suitably cryptic way for Cynulcus to allude to melodic responsion.[17]

Interim conclusions: (i) Larensius says that Euripides clearly borrowed Callias' tune; (ii) Clearchus said that Euripides perhaps borrowed Callias' practice of melodic responsion throughout *Medea.* Corollary: Clearchus supposed that previous antistrophic stanzas corresponded in metre and rhythm (and probably tempo and mode and perhaps choreography) but were melodised in some other way, probably with stricter regard for accent-patterns. We have no other evidence about how (for example) Pindar and Aeschylus set their antistrophes.[18] Composing a tune which both followed accents and was recognisably the same in strophe and antistrophe would be restrictive, even if an audience's perception of 'sameness' allowed slight variations (as with metre).[19]

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[16] I have taken τούτου like τοῦτ' in the previous sentence; it might also refer to Callias or Euripides.

[17] D'Angour (2006, 276-82) does take μέλος as 'technique of melodization'. Hense (1876) understood διάθεσις to refer to speaker-divisions within the fifth stasimon, but they do not obtain in 'all' the *Medea.* Ruijgh (2001, 273-4) took διάθεσις as the general structure of prologue, chorus, episodes alternating with stasima etc, but *Medea* is not especially innovative in this respect. For 'delivery' see LSJ s.v. διάθεσις I.2b.

[18] Dale (1968, 204-6) admits our ignorance but inclines to think that antistrophic music normally included melodic reponsion; similarly West (1992), 209-12. Koller (1956) believes Clearchus, but the alleged support from Plato and Aristoxenus (pp. 23, 28) is based on misreadings. For principles by which several later composers correlate pitch and accent see Cosgrove and Meyer (2006), Winnington-Ingram (1955), 64-73.

[19] With melodic responsion, the principle that an accented syllable bears the (equal-)highest note in its word would often constrain two syllables to the same pitch, e.g. the second and third syllables of A. *Pers.* 65 πεπέρακεν ~ 73 πολυάνδρου. Other tendencies, such as the avoidance of a rise in pitch during a circumflex and of a fall in pitch during an acute, would constrain e.g. *Pers.* 67 γείτονα ~ 75 θεῖον ἐ-. D'Angour (2013, 206-8) conjectures that early composers accommodated accents to a

So far we have been concerned with interpreting what Athenaeus and Clearchus meant. But were their ideas about earlier musical practice correct? I shall argue that something valuable can be extracted from them, whereas some scholars have interpreted claims (i) and (ii) as the worthless result of catastrophic misunderstanding.

I think two main ideas have motivated this belief. The first is that Larensius dates Callias 'shortly before Strattis' (fl. c.400), which is imprecise if he was active before 431, especially given the more obvious chronological landmark of Aristophanes. This has led to three further arguments for distinguishing a second, otherwise unknown Callias: Athenaeus consistently speaks of 'Callias of Athens' when talking about the *Lettered Tragedy* but of 'Callias' when talking about the famous comedian; the play's use of the Ionic alphabet points to a date around 403; and the *Lettered Tragedy* is not in the Suda entry for the famous Callias (κ.213). However, none of these arguments is weighty. Positing a second Callias does not stop the reference to Strattis being odd, since only here is Strattis used as a chronological landmark. The insistence on Callias being 'of Athens' here can be ascribed to Clearchus' influence; when Athenaeus cites Clearchus for 'Epaminondas the Theban' (13 590b), there is no question of postulating an otherwise unknown Epaminondas. Inscriptions demonstrate that the Ionic alphabet was widely known in Athens from c.450. And we do not know how soon after Clearchus the *Lettered Tragedy* was lost, or the origins of the Suda's information. This is slender grounds for cloning a comedian.[20]

The second factor which seems to underlie scholars' scepticism is a sense that Callias influencing Euripides is preposterous. Here, however, one must avoid discarding the baby with the bathwater. Both our central claims involve saying *propter hoc* where the evidence almost certainly admitted only *post hoc*. But such a slide is not uncommon in the Greeks' obsessive imposition of an inventor-and-influence teleology on the history of music.[21] Furthermore there is evidence that all three of Clearchus, Larensius and Athenaeus are using the topic of brainteasers to set puzzles for their respective audiences.[22] This playful mise-en-abime means we should expect that some claims will appear in a form more paradoxical than was warranted by the sources on which they were based. Hence a

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'repeated' melody by admitting a few swaps in the sequence of pitches; cf. D'Angour (this vol.) at n.15.

[20] If Callias test. 4 is indeed about him (as accepted in *PCG* and Millis and Olson 2012, 225-7), it gives two further titles not mentioned in the Suda. For more detailed summaries of either side of the debate outlined in this paragraph, see Ruijgh (2001), 269-71, Gagné (2013), 304 n. 21. An alternative rationale for the mention of Strattis will be mentioned below.

[21] For this way of thinking see now Barker (2014), particularly on Heraclides and Aristoxenus.

[22] For Athenaeus see above on Cynulcus' mention of Callias. For Clearchus see below on his treatment of Callias' prologue. Larensius makes a puzzle out of his three references to forfeits for failing to solve a puzzle, though editors have not understood this. At 10 448e Larensius describes the forfeit vaguely ('they used to drink the cup') and challenges Ulpian to make sense of it. At 457c he specifies that the cup was diluted, and again poses a question based on his paradoxical phrasing ('What punishment was undergone… if in fact they used to drink a diluted cup?'); Dobree's tentative <ἅλμῃ> κεκερασμένην, 'diluted <with brine>' (1833, 329), accepted by Kaibel (1923-5) and Olson (2006-12), produces a question which non-sensically answers itself. In fact, only at 458f-9a does Larensius finally (ἤδη) reveal the solution to the paradox – that the cup was diluted with brine and had to be downed.

viable model of claim (ii), for example, is that Clearchus believed that Euripides in 431 was the first tragedian to use melodic responsion, and suggested (wrongly but characteristically) that he got it from Callias, who had used it earlier under special circumstances. One need not discard the basic belief along with the dubious suggestion. As for claim (i) about 'the tune itself', I see no reason to rule out *a priori* the idea that Euripides did adapt a schoolroom chant, doubtless for a shocking and significant effect.[23] Unfortunately, we are not in a position to narrow down where in the *Medea* such an effect is most likely to have been deployed. I shall therefore leave this issue aside and focus in what follows on the more tractable question of melodic responsion.

The grounds for doubting Clearchus' testimony thus exist but are not forcing. Even if granted, such scepticism can be fleshed out into more or less plausible models. To take an example, Pöhlmann (1971, 239) and Rosen (1999) argued that Callias was an unknown later comedian of c.400, who made an absurd joke about how a quotable (hence earlier) play by Euripides had 'copied' (hence followed) the musical tactics of the present performance. This model not only entails a dubious second Callias, but also either that Clearchus knowingly promulgated an absurdity, or that he was confused by an obvious joke in a source with which he engaged very carefully. This engagement is clear especially from his treatment of Callias' prologue, where the speaker named the twenty-four letters, probably represented as the twenty-four choreuts as they are introduced to the audience. Ruijgh reports the principle manuscript at this point (2001, 286 and 289):

> πρόλογος μὲν αὐτῆς ἐστιν ἐκ τῶν στοιχείων, ὃν χρὴ λέγειν ἐκ τῶν στοιχείων διαιροῦντα κατὰ τὰς πάσας γραφὰς καὶ τὴν τελευτὴν καταστροφικῶς ποιουμένους εἰς τάλφα, βῆτα, γάμμα, δέλτα, εἶτα, θῆτα, θεοῦ γὰρ εἰ γε ἴωτα, κάππα, λάβδα, μυ, νυ ξει το ου πει ρω σιγμα ταυ υ παρον φει χει τε τω ψ εἰς το ω.[24]

This passage is clearly corrupt, for example in its accents and treatment of the sequence εἶ ζῆτα ἦτα. In particular, πάσας γραφάς must be emended via 453f 'Which one must divide in reading according to the παραγραφάς, just as before.'[25] The manuscripts' markings above the letter-names are a reasonable guess at what these 'marks beside' looked like in Clearchus. They indicate how to 'divide' the text, i.e. to extract words from unspaced majuscule. If the letter-names were originally written out, as in the manuscript, the reader

[23] A roughly comparable manoeuvre could be Mahler's inclusion of the children's round 'Bruder Martin' in the third movement of his First Symphony. This is unconventional (and flagged as such by the instrumentation) and demands interpretation: see e.g. Roman 1973, Jung-Kaiser 1997, 115-25. An alternative interpretative move in our case is to think that Larensius/Athenaeus is emboldening a more nuanced statement in Clearchus.

[24] Ath. 10 453cd. The sense probably began 'Its prologue is composed from letters. People must recite it by dividing it into words according to the side-markings, and by making it end by reverting to alpha.' Then there is a quotation largely composed of the alphabet in order, with several difficulties of detail.

[25] Ruijgh (2001, 287-8) accepts πάσας γραφάς as 'complete letter-names', without giving a parallel; in his treatment of 453f he bizarrely suggests κατὰ τὰς <πάσας γραφὰς> alongside <κατὰ τὰς> παραγραφάς (2001, 319-20).

would not need these *paragraphai*, since the unproblematic sequence ...ΑΛΦΑΒΗΤΑΓΑΜΜΑ... would clarify even the pitfalls of ...ΝΥΞΕΙΤΟΟΥΠΕΙΡΩ.... Rather, the manuscript's ψ (not ψεῖ) is the last trace that in Clearchus the reader was faced with mouthfuls like ...$\overline{\text{Κ}}\overline{\text{Λ}}\overline{\text{Μ}}\overline{\text{Ν}}\overline{\text{Ξ}}$ΤΟ$\overline{\text{Ο}}\overline{\Pi}\overline{\text{Ρ}}$... from which one had to extract trimeters by reading the marked letters as letter-names. Clearchus thus converted Callias' prologue into a riddle for his readers.[26] Such engagement makes it difficult to believe that Clearchus misunderstood a glaring anachronistic joke.[27] Furthermore, creating textualised riddles from source-material is quite different from promulgating a potentially confusing joke, and Clearchus' high-minded comments on the closeness of brainteasers and philosophy (457c) make it unlikely to me that he perpetrated the latter.

Welcker already hinted at a more attractive explanation for how Clearchus could have radically misjudged Euripides' music (1832, 152). I mentioned that Larensius' dating of Callias via Strattis calls for an explanation. One might infer that Clearchus originally cited Strattis before or à propos Callias. Then one possibility is that Strattis in his *Medea* lampooned Euripides by saying something like 'Do you remember Callias' show with that repetitive chorus? That's where Euripides' got his tunes from for *Medea*.' Such a comment, in a comedy, need not have picked on *Medea* because it did something musically remarkable. (Equally, however, such an innovation could have been precisely Strattis' point, or Clearchus might have mentioned Strattis for an unconnected reason.)

To summarise, there are models which allow one to discredit Athenaeus' testimony. They require one, I think, to hypothesise fragments of old comedy and to attribute a dim reading of them to Clearchus, whose remains (largely mediated by deipnosophists, admittedly) are a lively read with little evidence of sloppiness.[28] Such models cannot be falsified. However, I have argued that there is also a viable model which allows (with external justification) that the claims in the testimonium has been affected by *post hoc ergo propter hoc* thinking, and that their surprise-value may have been increased in transmission, and leaves a late fourth-century scholar with some reasons for believing that Euripides' *Medea* was the first tragedy to use melodic responsion.

Faced with these alternative approaches to Athenaeus, let us turn to see whether anything in the text of the *Medea* favours one over the other.

## Musical Discourse in *Medea*

The first passage which raises the theme of musical novelty is the nurse's parting comment at *Med.* 190-203. The chorus have arrived at the sound of Medea's indoor cries, and

[26] Clearchus' intervention here is emphasised rightly by Smith (2003, 318-20). Athenaeus duplicates it: his audience, like Clearchus', face a reading puzzle; Larensius' (aural) audience, like that of Callias, have that puzzle resolved for them.

[27] Clearchus also had ready access to information about dramatic dates if he wanted to check, since his relationship with Aristotle is considered to have extended into the latter's mature period (e.g. Tsitsiridis 2013, 4-5).

[28] On scientific matters, however, see Plu. *Fac. Lun.* 920e πολλὰ τοῦ Περιπάτου παρέτρεψεν 'He subverted many Peripatetic ideas' (fr. 97 Wehrli).

suggested that the nurse should fetch her for a therapeutic chat.[29] The nurse doubts that Medea will accept, since she is refusing advice (184-9), and adds:

> σκαιοὺς δὲ λέγων κοὐδέν τι σοφοὺς (190)
> τοὺς πρόσθε βροτοὺς οὐκ ἂν ἁμάρτοις,
> οἵτινες ὕμνους ἐπὶ μὲν θαλίαις
> ἐπί τ' εἰλαπίναις καὶ παρὰ δείπνοις
> ηὕροντο βίῳ τερπνὰς ἀκοάς·
> στυγίους δὲ βροτῶν οὐδεὶς λύπας (195)
> ηὕρετο μούσῃ καὶ πολυχόρδοις
> ᾠδαῖς παύειν, ἐξ ὧν θάνατοι
> δειναί τε τύχαι σφάλλουσι δόμους.
> καίτοι τάδε μὲν κέρδος ἀκεῖσθαι
> μολπαῖσι βροτούς· ἵνα δ' εὔδειπνοι (200)
> δαῖτες, τί μάτην τείνουσι βοήν;
> τὸ παρὸν γὰρ ἔχει τέρψιν ἀφ' αὑτοῦ
> δαιτὸς πλήρωμα βροτοῖσιν.
> You'd not be wrong to call former mortals maladroit and not clever at all, in that though they invented songs at festivities, at banquets and alongside dinner-parties as sounds bringing pleasure to our life, no mortal discovered how to stop Stygian pain with the Muse and with songs on many strings – pains from which deaths and terrible misfortunes overturn households. Yet these are what it profits mortals to cure with singing. Why do they vainly strain their cries where the dining is fine? After all, the satisfaction of the dinner is already present and intrinsically brings mortals pleasure.

The nurse dismisses former musical inventions (194 ηὕροντο, 196 ηὕρετο) which accompany commensality, and implicitly calls for a new, analgesic style.[30]

Old and new here can take their bearings from two possible deictic centres – the dates of performance and of action. There are two reasons to accept the level on which the nurse's comment is a metapoetic provocation by Euripides to his audience. First, she discusses singing rather than spoken conversation, and this points to the dramatic stylisation by which the chorus sings its part. Secondly, she addresses a vague masculine second person (190 λέγων), rather than the female chorus, and this would have helped the original audience position themselves as addressees. Pucci (1980, 24-32) pressed this metapoetic approach furthest, and saw in this passage Euripides' proto-Aristotelian definition of tragedy as the genre of psychological catharsis.

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[29] In 175 the proposed conversation is metaphorically called an ὀμφά (roughly, a divine prophetic voice). The chorus may thereby cast their advice in the terms of another form of music, namely sung hexameter prophecies; the metaphor would contrast with Aegeus' actual advice from Delphi later in the play).

[30] The nurse's three words for commensality cannot be sharply distinguished, but combine to cover a full range of contexts from public festivals to formal dinners (e.g. for a marriage) to smaller private affairs. Vox (2003, 831-2) compares Stesichorus fr. 172 Finglass-Davies. The nurse therefore targets a wide range of genres (ὕμνοι in 192 need not mean 'hymns' specifically).

However, tragic metapoetics do not steamroller characterisation.[31] The comments unavoidably come across to the audience also as those of a nurse in the legendary period, and one who seems to know very little about what she is talking about. She has glaringly elided various genres not connected to commensality – notably threnody which is often conceived as a source of comfort – and the Greek cliché that music did banish angst.[32] By focusing on commensal contexts for song she speaks of occasions from which nurses would have been socially excluded.[33] The nurse's musicological limitations may be confirmed by the clear parallels between her words and Medea's comments at 298-9:

> σκαιοῖσι μὲν γὰρ καινὰ προσφέρων σοφά
> δόξεις ἀχρεῖος κοὐ σοφὸς πεφυκέναι.
> For if you proffer new pieces of cleverness, to the maladroit your nature will appear useless and not clever.

Four concepts from the nurse's words – invention, uselessness, lack of cleverness (σοφός) and being maladroit (σκαιός) – recur together, just a hundred lines later. But whereas the nurse decries a set of musical inventors as useless and maladroit rather than clever, Medea decries the maladroit who see clever inventors as useless and lacking cleverness. If Medea is right, the nurse appears both maladroit (in judging inventions as useless and lacking cleverness) and hypocritical (in labelling the inventors as themselves maladroit).[34]

In summary, by giving the nurse's words metapoetic force while undermining her authority, Euripides leaves us in a quandary about how to interpret his own musical aspirations. The passage will turn out to prime us both for self-reflexive comments about music, and for their interpretative complexities.

The second key passage is the first half of the first stasimon, where the chorus sing – under Medea's gaze – a remarkable response to the first episode, in which they listened to Medea's speech about the humble social position of women, promised to keep silent if an opportunity for revenge should arise, witnessed the exchange with Creon, and heard Medea's plan for violent revenge:

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[31] Compare Torrance (2013), 268 'the metapoetic strategies used allow for two levels of meaning, making sense within the fiction but also serving as markers of artificiality.'

[32] The cliché: Hes. *Th.* 55 with West (1966); Crane (1990) suggests that Euripides and his audience might have rejected the cliché, though this is different from the nurse neglecting it. Actual therapeutic uses of music have a marginal presence in source from the late 5th century on: West (2000), 55-66. Pleasure from threnody: e.g. *LfgrE* s.v. γόος B4.

[33] The nurse mentions 'songs on many strings' (196-7), not as a future innovation which she expects to have therapeutic potential but as a pre-existing state which has failed to be therapeutic. As Mossman (2011) notes, the usage contrasts with Plato *Resp.* 1 339cd, where use of 'many strings' goes hand in hand with frequent modulation as a dangerous innovation. I hesitate, on the basis of just two passages, to interpret the nurse as incorrectly designating traditional music using a term associated with cutting-edge music.

[34] Other readings of the intratext are of course possible. One could be more cautious of Medea's rhetorical goals, or acknowledge that the nurse judges past inventions by their results, whereas Medea's targets judge their novelty *per se.*

> ἄνω ποταμῶν ἱερῶν χωροῦσι παγαί, [strophe]
> καὶ δίκα καὶ πάντα πάλιν στρέφεται·
> ἀνδράσι μὲν δόλιαι βουλαί, θεῶν δ'
> οὔκετι πίστις ἄραρε,
> τὰν δ' ἐμὰν εὔκλειαν ἔχειν βιοτὰν στρέψουσι φᾶμαι· (415)
> ἔρχεται τιμὰ γυναικείῳ γένει·
> οὐκέτι δυσκέλαδος φάμα γυναῖκας ἕξει. (420)
>
> μοῦσαι δὲ παλαιγενέων λήξουσ' ἀοιδῶν [antistrophe]
> τὰν ἐμὰν ὑμνεῦσαι ἀπιστοσύναν.
> οὐ γὰρ ἐν ἀμετέρᾳ γνώμᾳ λύρας
> ὤπασε θέσπιν ἀοιδὰν (425)
> Φοῖβος ἀγήτωρ μελέων· ἐπεὶ ἀντάχησ' ἂν ὕμνον
> ἀρσένων γέννᾳ. μακρὸς δ' αἰὼν ἔχει
> πολλὰ μὲν ἀμετέραν ἀνδρῶν τε μοῖραν εἰπεῖν.
> The springs of sacred rivers are running uphill, and justice and the universe are turning backwards: men's counsels are deceitful – pledges of the gods no longer hold fast – and tales will turn my life around to have good repute. Honour is coming to the womanly race: no longer shall a tale of unpleasant din constrain women.
> The Muses of aged singers will leave off harping on *my* infidelity. For it was not within our mind that Phoebus, leader of melodies, bestowed divine song to the lyre, since I would have sounded a song in response to the species of males. The long ages have much to say of our lot and of men's.

The world is topsy-turvy: men are abandoning their oaths; honour and repute are coming to women, and future music will have to treat male and female infidelity even-handedly.

Like the nurse, the chorus call for a revolution in music from which they have been excluded – here a revolution of content and social effect, rather than psychological effect. The implication that traditional poetry confers repute and honour upon men puts epic and epinician among the targets, and the dactylo-epitrite metre supports both connections.[35] The words ὤπασε θέσπιν ἀοιδάν | Φοῖβος (425-6) are a specific allusion to *Od.* 8.498 θεὸς [Apollo: cf. 8.488] ὤπασε θέσπιν ἀοιδήν, and indeed Demodocus' best-loved song is about the infidelity of Aphrodite. ἠγήτωρ (426) is mostly confined to epic. Epic did indeed discuss female infidelity (e.g. of Helen and Clytemnestra; more generally in Hesiod's *Works and Days*); but the contraction and correption of ὑμνεῦσαι (423) may point also to the dialect of iambus and so of Semonides' misogyny.[36] Jason accidentally adds a further target during the second episode, when he cites the ὕμνοι (as in 192, 427) of his fellow-Argonaut Orpheus as ideal songs whose power would nevertheless not compensate for a loss of honour (542-4). Orpheus' assassination by barbarian women was a common fifth-century story, and he turns (by the Hellenistic period at least) into a misogynistic

[35] Hopman (2008, 157) notes that Medea featured in early epic Argonautica stories and in *Pythian* 4.
[36] For the linguistic detail see Mastronarde (2002) on 423, 426-7.

pederast.[37] Euripides works him in to represent lyre-playing as a male preserve, and to connect this world with Jason's honour-code which will come unstuck, thanks to another barbarian woman.

However, the chorus' rhetoric cannot straightforwardly be endorsed. Their radicalism takes linguistic shape when they attribute separate βιοτή, γένος/γέννα, γνώμη, and μοῖρα ('life', 'race/species', 'mind', 'lot') to the two sexes, rather than to the human species as a whole; 'I' repeatedly means a monolithic 'womankind'. A more conservative audience's suspicions are enhanced by the palpable shallowness in their argument. By beginning with a proverbial *adynaton*, their predictions seem anchored in fantasy. They concentrate on the 'deceitful counsels' of men, after a speech emphasising Medea's intention to use deceit – a female speciality (408-9) – against Creon and Jason. Their inference from the existence of male oath-breaking (by Jason) to imminent honour for women is unsubstantiated. Medea's presence casts doubt on how far they believe their own words. Further objections arise from outside the characters' realm of knowledge. Even if this ode and the first pair of the second stasimon do discuss male infidelity, the tragedy as a whole will certainly not bathe women in glory. The claim that lyre-playing is an exclusively male preserve had for the audience at least one famous counter-example in Sappho.[38] And so on.

Confirmation that the chorus deserve scepticism comes in 1085-9, where they backtrack on their rhetoric in response to Medea's anguished monologue. This time Medea is not watching since she has ominously followed her children indoors; some audience-members may well expect her to kill them immediately, during the chorus's words.[39] They say: 'I have often approached harder debates than women should…

> ἀλλὰ γὰρ ἔστιν Μοῦσα καὶ ἡμῖν, (1085)
> ἣ προσομιλεῖ σοφίας ἕνεκεν,
> πάσαισι μὲν οὔ, παῦρον δὲ γένος
> (<μίαν> ἐν πολλαῖς εὕροις ἂν ἴσως)
> οὐκ ἀπόμουσον τὸ γυναικῶν.
> But since we too have a Muse who accompanies us for the sake of our wisdom[40] – not all of us, but small is the tribe of women (perhaps you would find one among many) who are not unfamiliar with the Muses –…

…I declare: the childless are more fortunate than parents; they circumvent efforts which may well turn out fruitless.' The references to women's relationship with the Muses and to

[37] See in general Gantz (1993), 721-5. Death by Thracian women: Aeschylus' *Bassarids* in ps.-Erat. *Cat.* 24, *LIMC* Orpheus section IV. His lyre-playing pitted against Sirens: A.R. 4.891-917. Pederasty after failing to rescue Eurydice: Phanocles fr.1; Ov. *Met.* 10.78-11.43 (leads Thracian women to kill him).

[38] On female musicianship in Greece see e.g. Greene (2005), Snyder (1989); Vazaki (2003) treats 5th-c. Athens; Pomeroy (1977) treats Hellenistic developments.

[39] In the event, she waits to revel in the messenger's report of the princess's death. But at 1065 she expresses confidence that the death is underway, and gives us no reason to expect that she will await confirmation.

[40] Either 'because we have wisdom' or (Kovacs 1994) 'to promote wisdom in us'.

a female γένος recall the first stasimon. But though the point here is still radical – young Greek women rejecting motherhood – the rhetoric has lost the polarisation of musical men versus unmusical women, begins with an apology for earlier bold claims, and is syntactically embarrassed. Their glaring avoidance of Medea's situation suggests that their horror at her plan is a factor in their climbdown.[41]

So far I have argued that the first stasimon predicts a content-based revolution in music in terms which are heavily ironised. What if Clearchus was right to believe that Euripides was innovating through widespread use of melodic responsion? The first stasimon would be a crucial moment either to introduce the effect or to confirm that it was not an isolated strategy of the parodos. Either way, the coincidences between form and content would be remarkable. The *adynaton* chosen implies a confusion in the natural states of up and down.[42] The repetition of πάλιν στρέφεται... στρέψουσι suggests the word 'antistrophe' itself. ἀντηχέω is both 'to counter in singing' but also 'to sing responding frequencies'.[43] And the first line of the antistrophe, 'The Muses of aged singers will leave off...', is the perfect sentiment to accompany formal innovation.[44]

These coincidences of content would still leave us in a similar quandary about how to interpret Euripides' musical comments. The late Ian MacAuslan suggested to me that Euripides, by making the melody sound 'wrong' (cf. 420 δυσκέλαδος?), could reinforce the chorus's claim to have been excluded from (lyre-)music. More plausible, I think, is to attribute the potential topsy-turvy melodisation to the characters, as a means of imitating content in melody, as is found elsewhere in Greek musical documents.[45] Melody would still contribute to undermining their ideas, in that the audience remains simultaneously aware of the disjunction between Euripides' musical innovation in form versus the chorus's prediction of musical innovation in content, which Euripides will not provide.

The final key passage for our purposes is the first strophic pair of the third stasimon, which occurs just after the chorus have witnessed Aegeus offering Medea a refuge in Athens, and then heard her plan to kill her children to exact revenge on Jason.

Ἐρεχθεΐδαι τὸ παλαιὸν ὄλβιοι [str.]
καὶ θεῶν παῖδες μακάρων, ἱερᾶς (825)
χώρας ἀπορθήτου τ' ἄπο, φερβόμενοι
κλεινοτάταν σοφίαν, αἰεὶ διὰ λαμπροτάτου
βαίνοντες ἁβρῶς αἰθέρος, ἔνθα ποθ' ἁγνὰς (830)
ἐννέα Πιερίδας Μούσας λέγουσι
ξανθὰν Ἁρμονίαν φυτεῦσαι·

[41] Cf. Mossman (2011), 332-5.

[42] Pherecrates' character Music describes Kinesias' innovative modulations in terms of a similar confusion of left and right: fr. 155.11-12.

[43] So of sympathetic frequencies in the Aristotelian *Problemata* 19.24 919b16.

[44] Phonetic correspondences between strophe and antistrophe are discussed, rather haphazardly, by Irigoin (1988). These may have reinforced the audience's perception of melodic responsion.

[45] E.g. in Limenius' *Paean*, the double-peak on 2 δικόρυφον, the chromatic run in 16 αἰόλοις, and the echo of it in 17 πετροκατοίκητος Ἀχώ (numeration follows *DAGM* no.21). Cf. D'Angour (this vol.). Cosgrove and Meyer (2006, 74-5) interpret the deliberate *opposition* of melody and accents in *DAGM* no.17 (2nd-c. CE setting of a threnody for Ajax) as expressing pain.

τοῦ καλλινάου τ' ἐπὶ Κηφισοῦ ῥοαῖς (835) [ant.]
τὰν Κύπριν κλήζουσιν ἀφυσσαμέναν
χώρας καταπνεῦσαι μετρίας ἀνέμων
ἡδυπνόους αὔρας· αἰεὶ δ' ἐπιβαλλομέναν (840)
χαίταισιν εὐώδη ῥοδέων πλόκον ἀνθέων
τᾷ Σοφίᾳ παρέδρους πέμπειν Ἔρωτας,
παντοίας ἀρετᾶς ξυνεργούς.
Children of Erechtheus, prosperous of old, and offspring of the blessed gods, you from the sacred and unsacked land who feed on wisdom most famous, and ever step in luxury through the air most bright – where once, they say, the nine pure Pierian Muses planted blonde Harmonia;
and they tell that as the Cyprian drew water at the streams of fair-flowing Kephisos, she breathed over the land the breezes of winds, measured and blowing sweetly, and that she ever places a fragrant garland of rose-flowers on her hair, and sends to sit by Wisdom her Cupids, collaborators in all forms of virtue.

The chorus presents Athens as largely sublimated from human needs.[46] The Athenians feed not on food but on σοφία – which includes the skill of the musician. They tread air not soil. Their stability is stressed not only by ἀπορθήτου ('unsacked', 826), but by the self-responsion of 'land' and 'ever' (826/837 χώρας, 829/840 αἰεί). The Athenians are autochthonous children of Erechtheus and gods; even Aphrodite and the Cupids are desexualised; the Muses 'plant' Harmonia without male reproductive involvement.[47] The ideology of autochthony and the tropes of the Golden Age make this an unchanging, pristine Athens.

Clearly the ode has metapoetic potential. Harmonia is a native Athenian, and Euripides' song instantiates her; Pucci (1980, 117) adds that Euripides' Athenian σοφία is nourishing. However, Euripides is not simply allowing Athenian choreuts to praise their homeland and audience. Yet again the characters are given ideas which seem suspect from the audience's perspective and even from their own. The comments on Aphrodite and Sophia seem superficial considering the ambivalence of these forces in the surrounding play, and the representation of Aegeus as both sexually unfortunate and dim-witted.[48] The audience would not have advocated stepping ἁβρῶς ('in luxury', 829), aerobatically or otherwise, and knew that Athens was no longer 'unsacked'. Harmonia's vegetal birth skirts the lust of her normal parents Ares and Aphrodite.[49]

[46] My reading resembles that of Nimis (2007). Swift (2009, 371-5) focuses on the stasimon's ironic engagement with *locus amoenus* tropes. For food, sex and deterioration as markers of the human condition in Hesiod's Prometheus myth, see Vernant (1974), 177-94.

[47] The Muses (~ the liberal arts) are logically prior to and generate Harmonia (musical attunement). The Greek could conceivably mean that Harmonia (social attunement) planted the Muses, instead of them being born from Zeus' affair with Mnemosyne.

[48] See e.g. Hall (1997), 103; Keen (2009, 628-9) seems too generous.

[49] The audience has been put in mind of Demodocus' song about them at 425 (see above). Hesiod *Th.* 933-7 provides a less scandalous version of how they begot Harmonia.

Thus once again the characters' thoughts are undermined both within the terms of the plot, and by the audience's broader chronological perspective. As with the first stasimon, accepting Clearchus' testimonium would again contribute to the ode's meaning conveniently. If Euripides was using melodic responsion, the musical form would, in the very act of performance, deconstruct and expose the ideological forcedness of the changeable/unchangeable opposition on which the chorus's ideas, including their picture of Athenian Harmonia, are premised: Euripides' Athenian melody innovates by repeating.[50] We have no evidence as to whether Euripides was innovating here in *harmonia* considered narrowly (e.g. use of the chromatic genus, or of modulation), but I do not think it would be hard for an audience to take Harmonia as also governing the adaptation of her intervals to accents.

There is, however, a supplementary aspect to Euripides' potential melodic innovation and its performative contradiction of the Corinthian women's description. Immediately after their idealisation, the chorus wonders whether this city 'of sacred rivers' (846 ποταμῶν ἱερῶν) will receive Medea. This clearly echoes ἄνω ποταμῶν ἱερῶν from the first stasimon. As I noted above when discussing lines 1085-9, Medea's plan to kill her children has distanced the chorus from her. In line with this, they here switch their earlier focus from the social confusion of Jason's oath-breaking to that of Medea's intended infanticide, and suggest that Medea's arrival will have an equal potential to turn Athens' rivers backwards, and to confound the pristine Athenian Harmonia, in the sense of socio-political attunement, which they have just outlined. This implication allows us to tie in the final strand of the play's musical imagery, the widespread Greek metaphor of civic attunement. At 306-8, Medea continues her complaints about the lack of respect accorded to inventors by asking Creon what πλημμελές (literally 'off-tune') suffering he fears from her, then rephrasing the question in terms of injustice. Medea's innovative thinking, in Creon's mind, threatens to introduce a disharmony of crime into the political attunement of Corinth. Later, this disharmony is revealed to redound on Medea herself too. At 1008 the tutor describes Medea's wail as 'not concordant' (οὐ ξυνῳδά) with the news which elicited it, namely that the princess has accepted Medea's fatal gifts – the point of no return. At 1269 the chorus predicts that the gods will send pollution 'concordant' (ξυνῳδά) with the crimes of kin-murderers. The juxtaposition of this claim with another wail – that of Medea's children indoors – points, as the tutor had, to the intrinsic discord of Medea's plans which harmonise not with her satisfaction but with the unmusical wailing of her and her children. The exodos leaves us with Medea accused repeatedly of pollution and heading off to live with Aegeus at Athens. In this light, lines 846-50 reveal the chorus's idealisation of Athens to be a hyperbole calculated to oppose stable *sophia* to Medea's innovating cleverness, an unsacked city to a wrecker of three governing families, a pure Aphrodite and virtuous Cupids to a passion which leads to pollution, Harmonia to a force of intrinsic disharmony – in short, to magnify the risk to Athens which Medea poses.[51] The

[50] For a deconstructionist approach to the ideology of autochthony see Loraux (2000), esp. 60, 111-24. Relatedly, Torrance (2013, 224) suggests that *Medea*'s recurrent words for novelty are a metapoetic comment on Euripides' innovation (if indeed it was one) of having Medea kill her children.

[51] Jason implies her pollution at 1346, 1371, 1393, 1406. On the risk of her heading to Athens (as she reminds us at 1384-5), see Sfyroeras (1994/5). Buchan (2008, 24) sees the chorus's Athens as a

performative contradiction, if the first strophic pair used innovative melodic responsion, would then not simply be a matter of showing up the chorus's naivety, but a means of making present in music the breakdown which they foresee, and which they now appreciate may derive from Medea's pollution rather than (as in the first stasimon) from men breaking oaths.

I tried first in this essay to clarify some issues in the slippery testimonium in Athenaeus. I argued that, although certain models in which Clearchus made a gross mistake are reasonable and cannot be disproved, they are no more plausible than a model in which Clearchus had justification for thinking that Euripides made a significant innovation in tragic melody in the *Medea*, by employing melodic as well as metrical responsion, and as a corollary by divorcing melody from pitch-accents. Secondly, I have argued that musical discourse is an undervalued but carefully thought-out theme in the *Medea.* Others have not considered the testimonium in relation to this material, but it turns out that of the three main passages the first can be taken as programmatic of Euripides' handling of the theme, while the other two are enhanced by the hypothesis of melodic responsion. The nurse in her parting comment misguidedly longs for innovation in the realm of music's psychological effect, and so primes us for both self-reflexive musical comments and difficulties in interpreting their degree of dramatic irony. The chorus in the first stasimon naively predict innovation in the realm of Greek song-culture's gender-bias. The hypothesis of melodic responsion fits the language of the first strophic pair remarkably well, and it could be interpreted as the Corinthian women choosing inverted melodic contours in order to express the inversion of the world-order and to effect the break from musical traditions which they are predicting. Most complex is the third stasimon, where the chorus project an idealised, innovationless image onto Athenian Harmonia, before questioning whether Athens could receive the disharmony of a child-killing Medea. Again the hypothesis of melodic responsion interacts intelligibly with the song, showing up the forcedness of the chorus's view of Athens, which at first seems simply naïve but is then revealed as a hyperbole calculated to bring home the risks which Medea poses to Athenian stability. If only Clearchus had offered some assertions about how Euripides introduced his innovations – a few 'wrong notes' at a time, or in a sudden revelation (e.g. on the words 'The Muses of old singers will leave off…'), or in any number of possible ways: we might then be able to evaluate the hypothesis more cogently. As it is, doubtless some readers will still prefer to reject the testimonium. I hope that I have at least convinced them that the melodies of the *Medea* should not only be on musicologists' wish-lists, since their interaction with the theme of musical innovation probably had far-reaching implications, for example for how the audience would assess the chorus' development over the first three stasima.[52]

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'nostalgic fantasy… whereas the real city is one that still reverberates with the consequences of Medea's arrival'.

[52] I do not have space here to work into my reading the possible interaction of melodic responsion with another feature of *Medea* which shows that it was 'through-composed', namely Euripides' limited metrical palette. All five stasima consist of two strophic pairs, and in the first four a dactylo-epitrite pair is followed by a predominantly Aeolic one; dactylo-epitrite and Aeolic are also combined in the antistrophic part of the parodos. The handling of dactylo-epitrite rarely ventures

I would like to end by mentioning two modern productions whose composers have been moved – presumably without Athenaeus' help – to reinforce the first stasimon's claims with melodic novelty. The Japanese director Yukio Ninagawa chose this moment to switch from recognisably Japanese musical idioms to an orchestral arrangement of Handel's *Sarabande* from HWV 437.[53] Along with this musical upheaval, Medea and several chorus-members pull 'streams' of red ribbons from their mouths, which Smethurst (2002, 13) explains as in part a reversal of a kabuki trope where faithful girls place ribbons in the mouths of their boyfriends. Secondly Annie Castledine's Greek production in Cambridge in 2007 set Medea amid a chorus of Edwardian suffragettes. Just before the first antistrophe, the composer Elspeth Brooke had the chorus break out of Greek into English and sing the first verse of the suffragette anthem 'The March of the Women'.[54] These modern theatre-practitioners, if I have been on the right track, have taken advantage of a performance opportunity in Euripides' text which readers had forgotten about for centuries.

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beyond hemiepes and epitrite elements, while the Aeolic sections return insistently to the colon x – ⏑⏑ – ⏑ – –, and incorporate iambs and dactyls in recurring ways.

[53] My information about Ninagawa's long-lived production is based on Smethurst (2002, here p. 12), and on two clips currently available on Youtube (www.youtube.com). Smethurst refers to Corelli's *La Follia*, which is a more ornamented version of the same folk-dance as Handel's piece.

[54] Words by Cicely Hamilton, music by Dame Ethel Smyth, date 1910.

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